Article

Use of Mobile Phones among Students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

Aliyu Abdulkadir
Nasarawa State University Keffi

Nurudeen Mu'azu Maifata
Nasarawa State University Keffi

Abstract

The study examined the motivation for using smart phones by students of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. The specific objectives are to; examine the motive of using smart phones by students of ABU, Zaria as well as identify the average time spent on smart phones by students of ABU, Zaria. The study used primary data and selected a sample of 320 in order to collect data from the respondents, with the use of a questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics SPSS version 16.0. The findings of the study revealed that the students mostly used their smart phones for social networking and they spent between 3-6 hours daily on their phones. The study recommended that the students should create a balance between social networking and academic activities; and that there should be a decrease in the amount of time spent on smart phones. The paper concludes that wrong use of smart phone could lead to negative consequences that would affect the academic performance of the students
.

Keywords: **mobile phones, students, Zaria, Ahmadu Bello, smart phones**

Introduction

A mobile phone otherwise refer to as smart phone can be described as a mobile device with characteristics similar to the ones of a computer. Student can check e-mail, browse the Internet and add personal functionality by downloading applications using Smartphone. Woodcock (2012) claimed that with the increasing number of students who have smart phones, various aspects of their lives change, they begin to operate this gadget to expand their learning experience. The use of smart phones in learning can lead students to become more aware of the advantages and benefits, such as the ease of learning anywhere and anytime, as well as can motivate students in learning activities.

Sarwar and Soomro (2013) argued that the negative impact of using smart phones in learning still existed, for instance, sending messages to exchange answers with other students,

reading answers recorded in the Smartphone as a way of cheating in the classroom, etc. However, Rambitan (2015) added that the major advantage of the internet in learning is the limitless possibility of expanding education to all parts of the country since it does not require a classroom as well as the interactive nature of the technology.

However smartphone abuse, to addiction is becoming more widespread in our society, particularly among students of higher institution (Ives, 2013). The invention of technology such as mobile phones has, no doubt, brought about immense positive progress to human societies, but this invention equally brought in its wake some observed attitudinal problems among high institution students. This mainly manifests among undergraduate students, who use internet enabled phones. However, this is not to say that these problems are solely caused by the usage of these phones as there are other causes, but that the attitudes of the users and the modes of the usages are significantly the contributing factors especially in the 21st century.

Scholars have identified the problems associated with phone usage and time (Junco, Merson & Salter, 2010; Wei & Lo, 2006), the attachment to phones (Gaser, 2006). Even outside the class room environment, most students who use internet enabled phones devote much time interacting with their phones by chatting on the WhatsApp, Twitter, 2go, Facebook, instant messages applications. Consequently, the time that ought to have been devoted to study and other useful academic endeavours are thus frittered away. In the light of the above, this study is set out to discover the motive and average period spent on smart phones by students of higher institutions with particular reference to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in Kaduna State.

Research objectives

1. To identify the motive for using smart phones by students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria?
2. To find out the average time spent on smart phone by students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria?

Literature review

Andrew (2009) and Ian (2013) key findings from their studies indicates that university students use smart phones mainly for socializing; to stay connected with friends & family as well as for latest social trends. They do most of this through social networking and messaging apps, according to Ian (2013) this explains why 89.6% of students have internet subscriptions on their smart phones, leaving 15.4% of all activities for phone calls and texting. Similarly, Olowu (2012) conducted a study on social network addiction among youths in Nigeria. In a study of 884 students of different universities in Nigeria, the study indicated that youths in Nigeria are spending too much time on social networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. Jwaifell (2013) conducted a study on The Intensity of Social Networks Group Use among the Students of Jordanian Universities and suggested that SNSs can be used as an academic tool for communication and interacting with/between educators and students alike. The study encouraged the integration of SNS into learning management systems.

Enikuomehin (2011) conducted a study on Consequences of Social Networks in an Internet Driven Learning Society in Nigerian Universities. The paper investigated the popularity of internet services within the university community and its consequences in academic performance. The study showed that there is a great adverse effect in the areas of combining social and media exploration like Facebooking with real studying and consequently leading to lower CGPA of student users.

Olubiyi (2012) conducted a study on social media and Nigeria Youth burden. He noted that these days' students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that some students are always busy *pinging*, *2going* or *Facebooking*, while lectures are on. Times that ought be channeled towards learning, academic research and innovating have been crushed by the passion for meeting new friends online, and most times busy discussing trivial issues. Hence most students' academics suffer setback as a result of distraction from the social media. He pointed out that youth waste their time through idle chats and other immoral acts. The result is that quality time that ought to be spent on academic research and other productive networking is lost.

Javid (2011) conducted a study on Mobile phone culture and its psychological impacts on students' learning at the university level. He investigated the effects of mobile phone on the performance of university students. In this study, most of the students claimed that they used mobile phones to contact their teachers and classmates to discuss matters related to their study. They also utilized the mobile phone to share useful information with their classmates and to consult a dictionary and thesaurus for educational purposes. Nevertheless, they agreed that the mobile phone wastes their precious time and money.

According to Kathryn (2014), a new study by James and Ben of Marketing in Baylor's Hankamer School of Business found out that female college students spend an average of ten (10) hours a day on their cell phones, while male students spend nearly eight (8) hours. James and Benas cited by Kathryn (2014), indicated that "as cell phone functions increase, addictions to this seemingly indispensable piece of technology become an increasingly realistic possibility and that approximately 60 percent of college students admit they may be addicted to their cell phone, and some indicated they get agitated when it is not in sight. Excessive use of cell phones poses a number of possible risks for students, she noted.

Methodology

Survey research method was adopted for the study. Surveys represent one of the most common types of quantitative, social science research. The population of the study comprised of students from all the faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for 2014/2015 academic session. The population size of the entire students (undergraduate) of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for 2014/2015 academic session is 33,691. The study used primary data and selected a sample of 381 as stipulated by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) out of which 320 were returned and found useable. The study employed questionnaire and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics using SPSS version 16.0.

Findings and discussion

Table 1 Motive of Using Smartphone by Students

Motive of using smartphone	Frequency	Percentage
Social Network Purpose	198	61.9

Educational Purpose	116	36.3
Business Purpose	6	1.9
Total	**320**	**100.0**

There are various motive of using smart phone by the students. Therefore, in order to determine the motivational factor of the students of A.B.U, they were asked to state their motive of using the smart phone as shown in table 1 above. The result shows that 198 or 61.9% of the students used their smart phone for the purpose of social networking. This is followed by 116 or 36.3% who used their smart phone for educational purposes. However, only 6 or 1.9% of the respondents were using their smart phone for business purposes. These findings can be supported by figure 1 which shows that, students that used their smart phone for social networking purpose has the highest frequency followed by those that used their smart phone for educational purposes. However, the students with the lowest frequency are the ones that used their smart phone for business purposes.

The implication of these findings is that majority students of higher institution of learning (61.9%.) in Kaduna State use their smart phones for non-educational motive such as visit social networking sites instead of using their smart phones for educational purposes such as using the Microsoft services on the their smart phones and visiting educational websites that would enhance their learning in school especially as regards to helping them source for materials in journal articles, textbooks, official report among others. Furthermore, students of higher institution of learning in the study area uses their smart phones more for web-browser services which is often linked to social media sites that distract students of higher institutions from learning and subsequently result to poor academic performance among the students. These findings agree with the position of Moon (2011), David (2012), Jwaifell (2013), Enikoumehin (2011), Olubiyi (2012), Olowu (2012) and Kathryn (2014) whose previously conducted study revealed that students of higher institution of learning uses their smart phones more for non-educational purposes such as social network services.

Table 2: Average Time students spent on Smartphone Daily

Time students spent	Frequency	Percent
0-3 Hours	71	22.2
3-6 Hours	116	36.3
6-9 Hours	103	32.2
9 Hours and above	28	8.8
Total	320	100.0

In order to know the average time spend by the students on smart phone daily, the study takes the range of different hours as shown in table 2. The results shows that 116 or 36.3% of the students spent 3-6 hours on their smart phone daily, followed by 103 or 32.2% which spent 6-9 hours on their smart phone daily. However, the result shows that only 28 or 8.8% of the students spent 9hours and above on their smart phone daily. This finding can be supported by figure 4.4 which shows that 36.3% of the students spent 3-6 hours daily on smart phones followed by 32.2% whose spend 6-9 hours daily on their smart phone daily. However, only 8.8% of the students spent only 9hours and above daily.

The implication of these findings is that majority students of higher institution of learning (36.3%.) spend 3-6 hours daily on their smart phones while another 32.2% of the respondents spend 6-9 hours daily on their smart phones which means these smart phones are now nothing but escape mechanism for students of higher institutions from their lecture halls/classrooms, libraries, workshops and laboratories. Another implication of these findings is that even while these students are attending lectures in classes, they also use their smart phones or they pay less attention and concentration to their lecturers or tutors and consequently result to poor academic performance among the students. These findings agree with the position of James and Benas cited in Kathryn (2014) whose previously conducted study revealed that students of higher institution of learning spend more time on their smart phones compared to their studies which results to poor academic performance among students.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that when mobile phones are abused, when not used appropriately as students it could result to negative consequences that would affect academic performance of students. This has been the issue when our students use their smart phones for social networking purpose, and the number of time students spent on smart phone daily instead of using the time on their academic activities and also for educational purposes.

Recommendations

1. Students of higher institutions in Kaduna State should use their smart phones for educational purposes such as visiting educational and library websites that would enhance their learning in school especially as regards to helping them source for materials in journal articles, textbooks, official report among others which can be used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research.

2. Students should spend more time on educational activities via their smart phones than social networking. Apps of databases like science direct, jstor, ebscohost, proquest, springer etc can be downloaded and use on smart phones.

References

Andrew, N., (2009). Smartphone vs. Feature Phone Arms Race Heats up; which did you buy? *ZD Net Publications*. Available at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

David, O. N., Helou, A. M., & Rahim, N. Z. A. (2012). Model of perceived influence of academic performance using social networking. *International Journal of Computers &Technology,* 2(2), 24-29.

Enikuomehin O. A., (2011). ICT, CGPA: Consequences of Social Networks in an Internet Driven Learning Society. *International Journal of Computer Trends and Technology* 2(2).

Gaser, M., (2006). *Machine translation and the future of indigenous languages*. Paper presented at I Congreso Internacional de las Lenguas y Literaturas Indoamericanas, Temuco, Chile. Available at http://www.cs.indiana.edu/pub /gasser/cilli.pdf

Ian, K., (2013). Bendable smartphones aren't coming anytime soon *The Sydney Morning Hera*ld Press.

Ives, E. A., (2013). iGeneration: The Social Cognitive Effects of Digital Technology on Teenager Master's Theses and Capstone Projects. 92. Available at http://scholar.dominican.edu/masters-theses/92

Javid, M. , Malik, M.A. & Gujjar, A.A. (2011).Mobile phone culture and its psychological impacts on students learning at the university level. *Language In India*, 11(2), 415422.

Junco R., Merson D., & Salter D. W (2010). The effect of Gender, ethnicity, and income on college students' use of communication technologies. *Cyber Psychology Behavior*.13((6)):619–627.

Jwaifell, Al-Shalabi, Andraws, Awajan & Alrabea (2013). The Intensity of Social Networks Group Use among the Students of Jordanian Universities. *Global Journal of Computer Science and Technology Network, Web & Security*, 13(2).

Kathryn, Z., (2014). *Younger Americans and Public Libraries* Available at http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/09/10/younger-americans-and-public-libraries/

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W., (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30 (3): 607-608

Moon, A. L., (2011). Impact of facebook on undergraduates' academic performance: Implications For educational leaders. *A (Ph.D) Thesis* submitted to Central Michigan University.

Olowu, A. O., & Seri, F. O. (2012). A Study Of Social Network Addiction Among Youths In Nigeria .Journal *of Social Science and Policy*, Review 4,

Olubiyi S., (2012). Social Media and Nigeria Youth Burden. Available at http://bluepringng.com/2012/12/social-media-and-nigerian-youth burden

Rambitan, Vandalita M. M. (2015). The Effect of Smartphone on Students' Critical Thinking Skill in Relation to the Concept of Biodiversity. *American Journal of Educational Research* 3.(2): 243-249.

Sarwar, M., & Soomro, T. R. (2013). Impact of Smartphone's on Society. *European Journal of Scientific Research*. 98(2) , pp.216-226 Available at http://www.europeanjournalofscientificresearch.com

Wei R., Lo V. H. (2006). Staying connected while on the move: Cell phone use and social connectedness. *New Media Society*; 8(1):53–72.

Woodcock, B., Middleton, A. & Nortcliffe, A. (2012). Considering the Smartphone Learner: an Investigation into student interest in the use of personal technology to enhance their Learning. *Student Engagement and Experience Journal*, 1(1). Available at :http://research.shu.ac.uk/SEEJ/index.php/seej/article/view/38/Woodcock

About the authors:

ABDULKADIR, Aliyu {BLIS, MLS, PhD Library and Information Science} A.B.U Zaria. University Library, Nasarawa State University, PMB 1022 Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. He can be contacted via abdulaliyu74@gmail.com

MAIFATA, Nurudeen Mu'azu {BLIS, MIM, Mphil Library and Information Science} A.B.U Zaria. University Library, Nasarawa State University, PMB 1022 Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. He can be reached at maifata@nsuk.edu.ng